

# MEMO

To: Faith Formation Leaders

CC: Catholic Schools Office

From: Rev. Gavin N. Vaverek, JCL, Promoter of Justice

Date: January 3, 2011

Subject: Safe Environment Week – January 15-22, 2011

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In support of the 2010-11 Safe Environment Program, we want to be sure that all children in any Church program know how Church personnel should act toward them. We are asking each Catechist should review the handout “Church People Should Respect You” with the young people in their programs. For older students that would find the language of this handout too immature, catechists can use the bulletin insert “You can help protect all God's children”. Catholic Schools are asked to be intentional in incorporating this material with their particular safe environment curriculum. Leaders of non-catechetical youth programs should be sure that all the young people in their group received and understand the material, and if necessary it should be presented to them.

We also want to encourage young people to be cooperating with the parents in staying safe on the Internet. There is a brief video available on the Internet safety which can be viewed for free (<http://www.ikeepsafe.org/assets/book/>) that can be of use in discussing this important area of safety. This can be viewed in the session or with parents at home. Please be certain in discussing Internet safety that you avoid any details of negative things. It is sufficient that minors know that it is important to stay safe on the computer and talking with their parents/guardians is critical. Young people sometimes need help remembering that people on the Internet are strangers and may not be what they seem and sometimes they can be dangerous.